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trated by one feature of his policy as Postmaster-General: He employed special agents or inspectors, just as his predecessors did, and as his successors have continued to do; but he used these men less as detectives than as instructors and helpers of postmasters and other classes of postal employees, and the effect of this was undoubtedly to make these employees more efficient and loyal.

Finally, he was in all respects straightforward, although as to men of this class, it seems almost unnecessary to dwell upon this virtue. He could not be otherwise than honest. This was a part of his birthright. He probably never harbored the thought of crookedness. His conscience was his mentor, and he knew, as old Isaak Walton truly expresses the thought, that "he who loses his conscience has nothing left that is worth keeping."

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#### REMARKS OF VICE-PRESIDENT BARNARD.

*Mr. President:*—The interesting address of Mr. Davis brings vividly to my mind the fact that at one time in my life I had some relation to the postal service while Mr. Blair was Postmaster-General. As a private soldier in the Union army, I was detailed to act as regimental postmaster, and clerk to the colonel, while the army of the Cumberland, under command of General Rosecrans, was encamped about Nashville in December, 1862.

The mail facilities were then so well organized that the soldiers were in almost constant communication with their families and friends at home. One of the advantages we had by the act of Congress, and the regulations of the Postmaster-General, was the same as that given by the Continental Congress to the

soldiers of the Revolution. We could send letters home without prepayment of postage, and one of my principal duties was to sign the colonel's name and title on the upper right-hand corner of the unstamped letters. The rate then was three cents, and the receiver of the letter paid the postage on its receipt.

The regulations were so well systematized that we seldom lost mails, except when they occasionally fell into the hands of the enemy. If we moved on before our letters arrived, they followed us. There was a regular system by which the mail for the whole army was sent to headquarters, and from there was distributed to division, brigade and regimental headquarters. I received the mail to be sent home at the colonel's tent, and on receipt of mail from brigade headquarters, it was my duty to assort it, and distribute it to the various companies.

I remember one incident which indicates the peril, and at the same time the care, to which soldiers' letters were subject. A young lady schoolmate in the north wrote me a letter, and enclosed her photograph. It reached the army about the time of the battle of Stone River, and in the confusion of that battle in some way some of the mail bags were rifled, and the mail destroyed. Among such was my letter. Fragments of it, however, reached brigade headquarters, and the brigade postmaster, with whom I was acquainted, found enough of the torn envelope in which the picture was still enclosed, to make out my name, and so he put the picture in his pocket, and saved it for me out of the ruins, although I never received the letter.

I am pleased to bear testimony from this personal experience to the efficiency with which Mr. Blair organized the postal service in the army; and will add that in my judgment, the satisfaction and encourage-

ment that the soldiers received from these mail facilities, contributed, in a large measure, to the final success of the Union cause. The patriotic letters received from home inspired the volunteer soldiers to do their whole duty to their country.

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#### REMARKS BY HON. JOHN A. KASSON.

I am very happy to add my word of praise to the career of Postmaster-General Blair, and to endorse all that has been said in his commendation by Mr. Davis. Though my term of First Assistant Postmaster-General was short, as I resigned to take my seat in Congress, I had been acquainted with General Blair in St. Louis, where he resided before coming to Washington. He and his brother, Frank Blair, had formerly been members of the Democratic party, but had joined the Republicans in the reorganization of parties which took place between 1855 and '60. Mr. Lincoln, in forming his cabinet, as will be remembered, chose to form it chiefly from his rival candidates for the Presidency. Hence his cabinet was lacking in harmony of action, and quarrels were prevalent in it, Seward and Chase being the leaders of factions.

Mr. Blair, while holding himself aloof, as far as possible, from the factional dissensions in the cabinet, was generally opposed both to Seward and to Chase. Of course, he was much interested in the progress of the war, in which his brother, Frank Blair, was a prominent officer, but he did not interfere with questions relating to the management of the army; neither was he so involved in these questions as to neglect his duties as Postmaster-General.